

THE INFLUENCE OF CONTEXTUAL CLUES STRATEGY ON THE STUDENTS READING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract: The objective of the research was to investigate whether or not the contextual clues strategy can give the influence on the students' reading comprehension achievement. The researcher applied one group pre-test post-test design. The sample of the research was the third grade of SMP Taman Siswa, Tanjung Karang.

The finding revealed that contextual clues strategy gave influence to the students' reading comprehension achievement. It can be seen from the progress of students' reading comprehension achievement after being taught through contextual clues strategy. The result of the research showed that the mean score of students' post-test in the experimental class was 78.63 higher than the mean score of students' pre-test was 58.63, with the mean difference was 20.0. The value of two significant was 0.000. It means that H_0 was rejected and H_1 was accepted since $0.000 < 0.05$.

Keywords: *Reading, contextual clues strategy, descriptive text*

PENGARUH STRATEGI PETUNJUK KONTEKSTUAL TERHADAP PEMAHAMAN DAN PRESTASI MEMBACA

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Abstrak: Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menyelidiki apakah strategi petunjuk kontekstual dapat memberikan pengaruh terhadap prestasi pemahaman siswa membaca atau tidak. Peneliti menerapkan desain one group pre-test post-test. Sampel penelitian adalah kelas III SMP Taman Siswa, Tanjung Karang.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi petunjuk kontekstual memberikan pengaruh terhadap pemahaman dan prestasi membaca siswa. Hal ini dapat dilihat dari peningkatan prestasi pemahaman siswa terhadap bacaan setelah diajarkan melalui strategi petunjuk kontekstual. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai rata-rata siswa post-test pada kelas eksperimen adalah 78,63 lebih tinggi dari skor rata-rata siswa pre-test 58,63, dengan perbedaan rata-rata adalah 20,0. Nilai signifikannya adalah 0,000. Ini berarti bahwa H_0 ditolak dan H_1 diterima apabila $0,000 < 0,05$.

Kata Kunci: Membaca, kontekstual petunjuk strategi, teks deskriptif

INTRODUCTION

Reading plays an important role in teaching and learning process. By reading the text, the learners are involved in bringing the information, knowledge, emotion, experience, and culture. In reading process, the students are required to be a good reader. They have substantial skills to comprehend the text. In reading, there are five aspects which helped the students to comprehend the English text, they are identify the main idea, get the specific information, making inferences, reference and identify the vocabularies.

Meanwhile, based on the information from the teacher when the researcher was conducted the pre research in SMP Taman Siswa Tanjung karang, in comprehending the descriptive text some of Junior High School students still have difficulties to identify the main of those five reading aspects from the text. They were also tended to be passive because of the students have no good self confidence in learning English. So, it was difficult for them to learn English well because they regard that English was difficult to be learn. In addition, when the students have some problems to get the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary from the text, they would spend much time looking up their dictionary to see the meaning of that unfamiliar vocabulary then they were able to understand the meaning and answer the questions.

Contextual clues strategy was the strategy how the readers use some clues of word based on the reading passage. The clues are sometimes placed in the same sentence as an unfamiliar word, or in nearby sentences. It proposed to determine

the meaning of unfamiliar words and clues which are related to the content of the text. So that the students can answer the questions after they have known the clues in the text. In reading activity, sometimes the students were not able to get the point of the information from the text because they could not use their semantic prediction to identify the meaning of unfamiliar words in the text (Brown, 2001). Moreover, it can also be used to overcome the students' problems identify the main idea, get the specific information, making inferences, reference and identify the vocabularies from the text given by the teacher.

Realizing the benefit of contextual clues strategy in reading comprehension, the researcher assumed that might be the influence of this strategy to the students' achievement in reading descriptive text that would also help the students get the information from the text by understanding the meaning unfamiliar words. Furthermore, Joffe (1997) suggested that the clues might be appeared within the same sentence as the word which refers to the meaning or it might be in the preceding or subsequent sentence. According to the explanation above, the researcher proposed this research to investigate whether or not contextual clues strategy can give the influence on the students' reading comprehension achievement.

The research was conducted at the first year of SMP Taman Siswa, Tanjung Karang of academic year 2012/ 2013. In this case the researcher used one class only that is class IXB which consisted of 22 students. The researcher used the reading text concerning several reading aspects and focused on the training of four

types of contextual clues strategy suggested by Joffe (1997), namely synonym, antonym, explanation and example.

METHODS

The researcher used *one group pre-test post-test design* to investigate whether or not contextual clues strategy can give influence on the students' reading comprehension achievement. Then the researcher administered pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was conducted to measure students' reading comprehension achievement before treatment and the post-test conducted to find out the students' reading comprehension achievement after being taught through contextual clues strategy. The design of this research can be described as follow:

T1 X T2

Where :

T1 = Pre-test

X = Treatment

T2 = Post-test

(Hatch and Farhady, 1982: 20)

The population of this research was the third grades of SMP Taman Siswa Tanjung Karang. One class was chosen as the experimental class which was given the treatments by using contextual clues strategy.

The procedures in administering the research are as follow:

1. Determining the problem
2. Determining the sample of the research

3. Determining the research instrument
4. Administering try-out of the test
5. Administering the pre-test
6. Conducting the treatment
7. Administering the post-test
8. Analyzing the data

The researcher used Repeated Measure t-test to know the level of significance of treatments effect. To see the significance, the researcher used the following formula:

$$t = \frac{X_1 - X_2}{S_D}$$

Where:

X_1 : Mean from pre-test

X_2 : Mean from post-test

S_D : Standard error of differences between means

The criteria are:

1. If the t-ratio is higher than t-table : H_1 is accepted
2. If the t-ratio is lower than t-table : H_0 is rejected

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher administered the pre-test in experimental class (IX B) in order to know the students' basic reading comprehension achievement before they were given the treatments. The first meeting in the experimental class (XI B), the researcher greets the students and gave them some questions lead to the topic.

She asked the students about their strategy in reading the text and their common problems in comprehending the text. During the process of three times treatments, the researcher discussed about descriptive text. It was because the students' problems in comprehending the descriptive text that was explained in the background of this research.

In the second meeting, the researcher gave descriptive text entitled "*The Burobudur Temple*" Before starting the learning process; the researcher gave some questions related to the topic to encourage the students' motivation during the learning process. For example, "*Do you know Burobudur temple?*", "*Did you ever visit that place?*" Some students could answer the question enthusiastically. So, the researcher continue to the next step, gave the students exercises for them. While the learning process, the researcher observed the students' activity. The students seemed enjoy the learning activity. Eventhough, some students still difficulty in getting the meaning of unfamiliar words, the students tried to guess the meaning by themselves. In line with Brown (2001) said that contextual clues strategy was the strategy that used some clues of word based on the reading passage. The clues are sometimes placed in the same sentence as an unfamiliar word, or in nearby sentences. It proposes to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words. So, without helping from the researcher or the teacher, the students were able to find the meaning of unfamiliar words by themselves using the clues from the text as their guidance answering the questions.

For the last meeting of the treatments, the researcher asked the students to read the text and do the exercises of descriptive text entitled "*My Favourite Book*". Based

on the researcher's observation during the learning process, she found the similarity of the result from the previous research of Joffe (1997) that was the students take their own experiences and combine them with information gathered from the text. Besides that, she also found other result that contextual clues strategy helps the students to define difficult or unfamiliar words and develop their background knowledge in understanding content of the text.

After finishing the treatment, the researcher conducted the post-test to find out whether or not contextual clues can give the influence on the students' reading comprehension achievement. From the result of students' post-test scores, it can be concluded that contextual clues can give the influence on the students' reading comprehension achievement. In addition, this research was also proved other results comparing with the previous research in chapter 2 conducted by Ahmad and Asraf (2004) and Wilingham (2006) that had the similarities with the result from this research. The similarities are by using a strategy which the learners made an effort to comprehend the texts by selecting the information from the text by comprehending the unfamiliar words and drawing inferences of the information from the text, so that the students can answer the questions helping by identifying the clues are related to the context. It has proved from the result of the research in SMP Tamansiswa Tanjung Karang. The mean or average score of posttest was higher than the mean score of pretest $78.63 > 58.63$. The gained score between the mean of pretest and posttest was 20 points.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In line with the results of the data analysis and discussion, the following conclusions are drawn:

Contextual clues strategy can give the influence on the students' reading comprehension achievement. It has been proven by the gain of students' mean score in post-test, that is 78.63 points higher than the mean score in pre-test 58.63 points. Contextual clues strategy can be used to increase the students' reading comprehension achievement in comprehending the descriptive text.

Suggestions

In reference to the conclusions above, the researcher gave some suggestions as follows:

1. Since contextual clues strategy gives the influence on the students' reading comprehension achievement, the researcher suggests to the teachers to apply contextual clues strategy as the solution to overcome the students' problems comprehending the text.
2. By using contextual clues strategy, the students are able to answer the question by using the clues based on the text and determine what kind of clues that they found to help them answering the questions.
3. For the further researchers can apply contextual clues strategy used to increase the students' reading comprehension in comprehending the descriptive text.

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